

# THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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## THE WORLD OF THE TIEPOLOS AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MASTER DRAWINGS FROM THE COLLECTION

In August, The Cleveland Museum of Art acquired The Stag Hunt, a drawing by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1727-1804), the well-known Italian artist of the late Rococo period. The family of Paul Wick, prominent Youngstown community and civic leader, donated the drawing in his memory. Two exhibitions, The World of the Tiepolos and Eighteenth-Century Master Drawings from the Collection, will illustrate the historical context of the new acquisition. Both shows will open on October 6, 1981, and close on November 22, 1981. The works were selected from the Museum's own collection by Dr. Hilliard Goldfarb, a specialist in Italian Renaissance and Baroque art who holds a joint appointment funded by the Mellon Foundation as assistant curator for prints and drawings and assistant professor at Case Western Reserve University.

Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo and his celebrated father, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, were the most important Venetian painters of the eighteenth century. Both were renowned draftsmen, but it's the younger Tiepolo in particular whose prints and drawings show him at his best and most independent. The World of the Tiepolos includes representative drawings and etchings by Battista and Domenico and amply illustrates the theatrical, carnival spirit and light, flowing styles of both artists. Included are sketches for paintings or frescoes, finished drawings, and individual pieces from several large and important series.

Of particular interest is Domenico's wry, satirical Punchinello series, to which the Museum's new acquisition, The Stag Hunt, belongs. The Museum now owns nine of the 104 original drawings in the series, and this exhibition offers

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a rare opportunity to see all nine together. Since the series was dispersed after a 1921 Paris showing, the Museum's nine drawings represent an unusually large and diverse selection. These drawings capture eighteenth-century Venice in the guise of scenes from the life and death of Punchinello, a popular comic figure from the worlds of Commedia dell'Arte, street entertainment, and puppetry. In exaggerated, beak-like masks, cylindrical hats, and floppy clothing, Punchinellos cavort through these drawings.

While The World of the Tiepolos is on view, museum-goers will have a chance to experience the kind of theater which nurtured the Punchinello character. On Sunday, November 1, at 4:00 p.m., the innovative Western Wind Ensemble and the puppets of Jane Stein will bring to life Orazio Vecchi's 1594 Madrigal comedy, L'Amfiparnaso. Like Domenico Tiepolo's Punchinello drawings, the performance is pervaded by a spirit of ribald mischief and buffoonery and a bittersweet mixture of gaiety and sadness.

Eighteenth-Century Master Drawings complements The World of the Tiepolos with works by artists contemporary with the Tiepolos. Most, such as Watteau, Fragonard, and Boucher, also display the whimsical charm of the late Baroque and Rococo periods. One-third of the master drawings are by fellow Venetians, with special emphasis on the work of Giovanni Battista Piazzetta (1682-1754) whose dramatic style influenced the young Battista Tiepolo. The Cleveland Museum of Art has one of the three finest collections of Piazzetta drawings in the United States.

The Department of Prints and Drawings schedules at least twelve exhibitions a year from its own holdings. The high turnover is deliberate; it protects the delicate and fragile pieces which cannot be exposed to light for long periods. Even on exhibition, they often need special lighting conditions. The exhibitions also introduce the public to continuously varying aspects of the Museum's rich

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collection of prints and drawings, works which are often not widely known. Photographs, for example, cannot convey the warm tones of pieces like the Punchinello drawings or Boucher's The Fountain. These exhibitions thus offer the public an opportunity to examine for themselves rarely seen, delicately detailed works of art.

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For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Relations Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.